

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
 POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
 Hood Mercury Response - Removal Polrep



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
**Region VI**

**Subject:** **POLREP #4**  
**Progress POLREP**  
**Hood Mercury Response**

**Odessa, TX**  
**Latitude: 31.8825701 Longitude: -102.3758878**

**To:** Anthony Buck, TCEQ  
 Ragan Broyles, Superfund Division  
 Lawrence Stanton, EPA HQ

**From:** Mike McAteer, OSC

**Date:** 4/2/2014

**Reporting Period:** 3/28 - 4/1/2014

**1. Introduction**

**1.1 Background**

<b>Site Number:</b>	<b>Contract Number:</b>	
<b>D.O. Number:</b>	<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	
<b>Response Authority:</b> CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b> PRP	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b> Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b> 3/20/2014	<b>Start Date:</b>	3/20/2014
<b>Demob Date:</b>	<b>Completion Date:</b>	
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>	<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>	<b>State Notification:</b>	
<b>FPN#:</b>	<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

**1.1.1 Incident Category**

Release of hazardous substance (elemental mercury) inside a school

**1.1.2 Site Description**

**1.1.2.1 Location**

Hood Junior High School - 601 E. 38th Street, Odessa, Texas 79762

**1.1.2.2 Description of Threat**

EPA Region 6 was contacted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) as well as the Texas Department of State Health Services on March 18, 2014, regarding a release of

approximately 1 liquid ounce of elemental mercury inside Hood Junior High School in Odessa, Texas.

Early reports on the release indicated that a student found the mercury in a bottle near the school and he brought it inside the school where he shared it with other classmates. Once school administrators recognized that the students were playing with mercury, the exposed students were isolated from the rest of the students then sent by school bus to two local hospitals.

The school district has hired local hazmat contractors to conduct a cleanup of the school. Early assessment activities conducted appear to indicate that the contamination is limited to two classrooms and the cafeteria.

An EPA On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) as well as two START personnel mobilized to the school on March 20th to provide assistance to the school district and the Ector County Health District.

### **1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results**

## **2. Current Activities**

### **2.1 Operations Section**

#### **2.1.1 Narrative**

Upon arrival, EPA met with Ector County Independent School District (ECISD) officials and their contractors to evaluate response actions to date. Allied International Emergency and CTEH have been contracted by ECISD to remediate Hood Junior High School. While clean-up activities are ongoing, students are attending class at the nearby Technical High School. EPA continues to conduct oversight and further investigate any possible spread of the mercury into the surrounding community by students who were potentially exposed.

#### **2.1.2 Response Actions to Date**

A complete assessment of all rooms inside school (137,000+ sq ft.) using the "activity based" method was completed by contractors for ECISD. This method monitored the headspace (mercury vapors released) of recovered shoe covers after personnel walked in the area of concern for ten minutes to simulate student potential activities.

All areas of school that exceeded the clearance standard of 3 ug/m<sup>3</sup> by means of headspace readings were then remediated by one of two methods: (1) mercury binding MercX product or (2) polymer chelation (gel).

Activity based sampling was repeated in areas requiring additional remediation until headspace values were below 3 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. By 1800 hours on April 1, 2014 all impacted areas of the school had been remediated and no activity based headspace reading levels exceeded 3 ug/m<sup>3</sup>.

NIOSH air sampling in remediated areas began at 0830 hours on March 31, 2014 and will continue until all affected areas have been sampled. It is estimated that this sampling will be completed by approximately 1600 hours April 2, 2014. All air sampling data should be received from the lab by 1700 hours on April 3, 2014.

#### **2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)**

#### **2.1.4 Progress Metrics**

<i><b>Waste Stream</b></i>	<i><b>Medium</b></i>	<i><b>Quantity</b></i>	<i><b>Manifest #</b></i>	<i><b>Treatment</b></i>	<i><b>Disposal</b></i>

## **2.2 Planning Section**

### **2.2.1 Anticipated Activities**

All data from 8-hour NIOSH air sampling should be received by 1700 hours on April 3, 2014.

#### **2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

If all 8-hour NIOSH air samples are reported at levels less than 3 ug/m3, then no further remediation will be required inside the school.

#### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

EPA will review all air sampling as it is received by the ECISD contractor.

### **2.2.2 Issues**

## **2.3 Logistics Section**

No information available at this time.

## **2.4 Finance Section**

No information available at this time.

## **2.5 Other Command Staff**

No information available at this time.

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

Ector County Independent School District

Ector County Health Department

Texas Department of State Health Services

TCEQ - Midland District

U.S. EPA

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

Weston Solutions, Inc.

Allied International Emergency Services

Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health, LLC (CTEH)

TAS Environmental

Hazmat Response

**4. Personnel On Site**

No information available at this time.

**5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

**6. Additional sources of information**

No information available at this time.

**7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.